



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
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Minutes 10/12/2011

Arlington Tree Committee

Minutes of Weds., October 12, 2011 Meeting

Hearing Room, Arlington Town Hall, Arlington, MA

Present: Sally Naish (Chair), Mary Ellen Aronow, Eliza Burden, Lisa Decker, Patti Muldoon, Walter Phillips, Ed Trembly, Greg Watt.

Visitors: Libby Shaw and Maureen O'Sullivan from Trees for Watertown. John Fry, Chair of the Lexington Tree Committee, was invited but unable to attend.

Sally Naish called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

ITEM 1 September Minutes were reviewed but not yet approved.

ITEM 2 Introductions of Trees for Watertown members, Libby Shaw and Maureen O'Sullivan. They explained the origin of Trees for Watertown - not an official town committee but a group of residents formed in 1985 before there was a Watertown tree warden. Libby gave explanation of the recent amendment made to the Mass. Public Shade Tree Act (Ch. 87) that was drafted in collaboration with the Mass. Tree Warden's Assoc. She believes this amendment is one step, but it has no "teeth." She would like citizen groups like Arlington's Tree Committee and Trees for Watertown and others to band together to work on giving this bill more teeth. Shaw thinks the bill needs penalties that are in keeping with the loss of these trees. She recommended we proceed by 1) identifying local tree groups like ours, 2) get ourselves familiar with Chap 87, esp. #14 amendment, and 3) come up with a shared approach that would be more satisfying to all communities impacted. She urged us to visit their website, treesforwatertown.org and look at links to articles and videos.

TC members were in agreement that we should try to work together with Watertown and other like-minded tree organizations. Ed Trembly offered to be the Arl. TC rep in this effort. Sally asked that we all get names to Ed by next Friday Oct 21 of people we know in different towns or organizations that might want to be part of this effort.

ITEM 3 Town Day Review. Everyone agreed that application has to be in earlier so we get better placement along Mass Ave and therefore higher traffic to the booth. PM thought posters of "Good, Bad and Ugly" were again helpful and TC sign and tree branches attracted interest. Decided it would be helpful to have business cards to handout indicating our website address; Mary Ellen will research this. Helpful also to have Suggested Tree Species handouts and to have a Tree Request Sign-up Form on the table.

ITEM 4 Town's Fall Tree Planting. Sally reported that Arlington will plant 50 trees this fall (25 sugar maples and 25 red maples) and they have contracted with Tibbets Landscaping to do the planting. TC members are pleased there will be additional trees planted but inquired where the funding was coming from.

ITEM 5 Cambridge Tree Ambassador Program. Sally reported on a program in Cambridge that hires a student to spend the summer bicycling the streets of Cambridge to promote trees and maintain newly planted trees in town.

ITEM 6 Publicity/Fundraising. Eliza reminded the group that DCR has 50-50 matching grants money available to municipalities and nonprofit organizations interested in protecting and managing community trees. Applications are due on November 1 or May 1. Eliza will seek more information.

ITEM 7 Discussion of where trees are needed in Arlington. Eliza offered to look at the list generated by Climate Summer activities in July to find some priority tree planting sites for the fall tree planting effort.

ITEM 8 Trees Report.

- Trees Please to be one of recipients of proceeds made from the upcoming Friends of the Fox Used Clothing sale.
- Sally stated that there will be a walk to assess the current state of the Town Hall Garden. A Tree Committee rep is not needed at the walk.
- Sally reminded us of the Tree Steward training program occurring on Oct 28 and 29.

ITEM 9 Brief discussion of ways to generate funds for the planting of new trees. What happens to trees in town when they are disposed of? Is there any value to the wood we are disposing? Could we cut the trees down in a way that could make them marketable (i.e. 12-16 foot lengths)?

ITEM 10 Trees and Sidewalks. Ed asked if trees cause eventual sidewalk disruptions, should the TC be trying to see that sidewalks are designed differently to accommodate the growth of the tree so tree roots don't have to be cut which is harmful to tree and often leads to unsteady trees. Lisa D explained that in some cases root barriers are installed at planting time to encourage roots to grow down rather than out.

ITEM 11 Other Business.

- Walking in Arlington Historic Walk, October 29. Eliza will get info to Sally about Mt Gilboa.
- Lisa D will research the tree species planned for the Mass Ave Corridor project in East Arlington.

Next meeting: Weds. November 9, 7:00 at Selectmen's Hearing Room at Town Hall. Ed Trembly will be taking minutes.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm
Submitted by Eliza Burden